



# Alternate Assessment Overview

- ◆ Pg. 1—MSAA Basics
- ◆ Pg. 1—MSAA Summative Assessment
- ◆ Pg. 2—Accommodations
- ◆ Pg. 2—Getting Ready



## MSAA Alternate Assessment

The Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) is based on the Core Content Connectors (CCCs) which are Alternate Achievement Standards (AAS) developed from the Common Core State Standards. It is intended for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The MSAA will test students in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics and replaces the CRT-Alt Reading and Math Tests. (**NOTE:** Alternate students in grades 4, 8, and 10 will continue taking the CRT-Alt Science assessment.)

### Test Window:

March 30-May 16, 2016

#### Judy Snow

State Assessment Director  
406.444.3656  
jsnow@mt.gov

#### Yvonne Field

Assessment Specialist  
406.444.0748  
yfield@mt.gov

#### Angie Koehler

Administrative Assistant  
406.444.3511  
akoehler@mt.gov

#### Pam Birkeland

Special Projects  
pbirekland@mt.gov

#### Paula Schultz

Smarter Accommodations  
pschultz2@mt.gov

## MSAA Summative Assessment

The MSAA Summative Assessment in ELA and Mathematics is required for students in grades 3-8, and 11 who [qualify for the alternate assessment](#). The assessment is administered online. Depending on students' individual needs, some students will interact directly with the computer while others will interact with printed materials prepared by the test administrator. The assessment has built in supports to help students respond independently.

### Timing and Length

The summative assessment includes:

- Two Mathematics sessions, approximately 35-40 total items
- Four ELA sessions, approximately 35-40 total items

Most of the items on the summative assessment are selected response; however, some are constructed response. The test must be administered one-on-one by a Montana-certified licensed educator employed by the district or paraprofessional within sight and hearing of a Montana-certified licensed educator employed by the district. The test administrator will determine the length of each session based on individual student need. It is estimated that the mathematics and ELA assessments will take 1.5-2 hours each to administer.

## MSAA Accommodations

IEPs will need to be reviewed and updated to indicate participation in the MSAA in ELA and Mathematics. Participation in the assessment itself is considered the ultimate accommodation. However, MSAA has several accommodations that require documentation in a student's IEP in order to be used for the MSAA. These include:

- Assistive Technology for presentation of items to students
- Assistive Technology for student response to items
- Paper versions of items
- Scribe/Transcription
- Sign Language (e.g. ASL, PSE, SEE)

### Assistive Technology (AT)

Students may use a variety of assistive technology devices to input responses, both as selected responses and as text-based open responses. Input could occur through alternate keyboards, eye gaze, switch devices, or speech-to-text, and other similar input devices. Students are also expected to access text using AT devices (e.g., screen readers). Refreshable Braille display is not supported for presentation of text-based content for the first operational year.

MSAA recommends testing AT devices for compatibility using the sample items that are available now on the MSAA Test Administration Portal.

The MSAA Assessment System allows a student or TA to use the shortcut keys on the keyboard to achieve basic functions when usage of a mouse is not an option.

## Getting Ready

### Curriculum and Instruction

The Core Content Connectors (CCCs) are alternate achievement standards aligned to the Common Core State Standards that were developed using the Learning Progression Frameworks to identify the big ideas in the Common Core State Standards that are essential for students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities who participate in alternate assessments.

Instructional resources can be found on the NCSC wiki [https://wiki.NCSCpartners.org/index.php/Main\\_Page](https://wiki.NCSCpartners.org/index.php/Main_Page). These include CCC and Curriculum Guides, Universal Design for Learning Units and guides, Scripted Model Instructional Units and guides, and interim assessments.

### Sample Items

Sample items can be found on the MSAA Assessment System Website (SEE OPI WEBSITE FOR LINK TO POST IN FEBRUARY) They are available in an online and PDF format. ELA Sample items are currently available for grades 4, 8, and 11. Math sample items are available for grades 3, 6, and 11. Available assessment features for the online sample items include alternate color themes, answer masking, audio player, line reader, and magnification.

### Resources

The OPI MSAA Page ([http://www.opi.mt.gov/curriculum/MontCAS/#gpm1\\_6](http://www.opi.mt.gov/curriculum/MontCAS/#gpm1_6)) contains Montana-specific resources and documents as well as links to the MSAA resources and sites.

The MSAA Summative Assessment System houses the online assessment system, the technology requirements, and sample items. The assessment system is being transitioned to a new host, an update link will be posted to the OPI MSAA page and an email will be sent to STCs.

### Technology

The [technology requirements](#) for MSAA can be found on the OPI MSAA page in the Administration section.